



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Arkansas' Unemployment Rate Decreases to 4.5 Percent in February

Arkansas Civilian Labor Force Summary:

Labor force data, produced by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics and released today by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, show Arkansas' seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased one-tenth of a percentage point, from 4.6 percent in January to 4.5 percent in February. Arkansas' civilian labor force declined 12,775, a result of 10,820 fewer employed and 1,955 fewer unemployed Arkansans. The United States' jobless rate also decreased one-tenth of a percentage point, down to 6.2 percent in February.

BLS Program Operations Manager Susan Price said, "The unemployment rate in Arkansas decreased one-tenth of a percentage point in February, due to a decline in the size of the civilian labor force. While still up compared to February 2020, Arkansas' jobless rate is one and seven-tenths of a percentage point lower than the national rate."

Arkansas Nonfarm Payroll Job Summary:

Arkansas' nonfarm payroll jobs rose 500 in February to total 1,246,100. Four major industry sectors added jobs, more than offsetting declines in six sectors. Jobs in **government** increased 2,100. Gains in state government, educational services (+2,100) were largely related to the return of public college and university staff after winter break. **Professional and business services** added 2,000 jobs. Hiring was reported in administrative-support services (+1,300) and professional-scientific-technical services (+1,000), the latter of which includes activities such as accounting and tax preparation services. Smaller gains were posted in **educational and health services** (+900) and **other services** (+900). Employment in construction declined 1,400, mostly due to winter weather events in February. Jobs in **leisure and hospitality** decreased 1,300, all in food services (-2,100).

Compared to February 2020, nonfarm payroll jobs in Arkansas are down 41,500. Declines occurred in ten major industry sectors. Employment in **leisure and hospitality** fell 15,400. Most of the contraction was in food services (-11,500). Jobs in **government** decreased 8,500, with local government posting the largest decline (-6,100). **Educational and health services** lost 7,600 jobs. Most of the loss occurred in health care and social assistance (-7,000). Jobs in **manufacturing** are down 4,400, largely in nondurable goods manufacturing (-4,100). Notable declines were also posted in **professional and business services** (-3,000), **information** (-1,200) and **financial activities** (-1,000). Jobs in **construction** rose 600, related to large-scale projects across the State.

ARKANSAS CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY, Seasonally Adjusted

	February 2021	January 2021	February 2020	Chg From Jan 2021	Chg From Feb 2020
Civilian Labor Force	1,363,154	1,375,929	1,371,944	-12,775	-8,790
Employment	1,301,585	1,312,405	1,319,917	-10,820	-18,332
Unemployment	61,569	63,524	52,027	-1,955	9,542
Unemployment Rate	4.5	4.6	3.8	-0.1	0.7
U.S. Unemployment Rate	6.2	6.3	3.5	-0.1	2.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

ARKANSAS NONFARM PAYROLL JOBS, Not Seasonally Adjusted (In Thousands)

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Group 2017	February 2021	January 2021	February 2020	Chg From Jan 2021	Chg From Feb 2020
Total Nonfarm Payroll Jobs	1246.1	1245.6	1287.6	0.5	-41.5
Goods Producing	214.3	216.3	218.4	-2.0	-4.1
Mining, Logging, & Construction	57.6	59.0	57.3	-1.4	0.3
Mining & Logging	5.2	5.2	5.5	0.0	-0.3
Construction	52.4	53.8	51.8	-1.4	0.6
Specialty Trade Contractors	33.2	34.1	33.0	-0.9	0.2
Manufacturing	156.7	157.3	161.1	-0.6	-4.4
Durable Goods	76.0	76.3	76.3	-0.3	-0.3
Nondurable Goods	80.7	81.0	84.8	-0.3	-4.1
Service Providing	1031.8	1029.3	1069.2	2.5	-37.4
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	248.9	250.0	249.1	-1.1	-0.2
Wholesale Trade	46.2	46.6	47.2	-0.4	-1.0
Retail Trade	137.5	138.2	135.0	-0.7	2.5
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	65.2	65.2	66.9	0.0	-1.7
Information	11.4	11.6	12.6	-0.2	-1.2
Financial Activities	63.1	63.9	64.1	-0.8	-1.0
Finance & Insurance	50.1	50.7	50.3	-0.6	-0.2
Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing	13.0	13.2	13.8	-0.2	-0.8
Professional & Business Services	142.4	140.4	145.4	2.0	-3.0
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	44.2	43.2	44.3	1.0	-0.1
Management of Companies	33.4	33.7	34.1	-0.3	-0.7
Administrative & Support Services	64.8	63.5	67.0	1.3	-2.2
Educational & Health Services	188.4	187.5	196.0	0.9	-7.6
Educational Services	16.2	15.8	16.8	0.4	-0.6
Health Care & Social Assistance	172.2	171.7	179.2	0.5	-7.0
Ambulatory Health Care	60.3	59.2	60.4	1.1	-0.1
Social Assistance	35.6	35.8	40.3	-0.2	-4.7
Leisure & Hospitality	104.4	105.7	119.8	-1.3	-15.4
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	10.5	10.0	11.8	0.5	-1.3
Accommodation & Food Services	93.9	95.7	108.0	-1.8	-14.1
Accommodation Services	8.9	8.6	11.5	0.3	-2.6
Food Services	85.0	87.1	96.5	-2.1	-11.5
Other Services	65.6	64.7	66.1	0.9	-0.5
Government	207.6	205.5	216.1	2.1	-8.5
Federal Government	20.2	20.3	20.5	-0.1	-0.3
State Government	77.7	75.6	79.8	2.1	-2.1
State Government, Educational Services	31.1	29.0	31.9	2.1	-0.8
State Government, Excluding Education	46.6	46.6	47.9	0.0	-1.3
Local Government	109.7	109.6	115.8	0.1	-6.1
Local Government, Education Services	67.5	67.4	71.4	0.1	-3.9
Local Government, Excluding Education	42.2	42.2	44.4	0.0	-2.2

Source: Monthly Survey of Employers, based on 1st Quarter 2020 benchmark.

Notes: Current month's data are preliminary; previous month's data are revised.



About the Arkansas Department of Commerce:

The Arkansas Department of Commerce is the umbrella department for workforce and economic development drivers. Its divisions and regulatory boards include Division of Aeronautics, Waterways Commission, Wine Producers Council, Division of Workforce Services, Office of Skills Development, State Bank Department, Insurance Department, Securities Department, Economic Development Commission and Development Finance Authority. It was established July 2019 as part of Governor Asa Hutchinson’s wide-sweeping efficiency and transformation efforts to reduce 42 cabinet agencies to 15 while maintaining services for all Arkansans.



About the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

The mission of the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services is to support and secure Arkansas’s economic vitality through a highly skilled workforce by administering programs and providing services that empower employers and jobseekers. ADWS is a division of the Arkansas Department of Commerce.



U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

About Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

The Bureau of Labor Statistics measures labor market activity, working conditions, price changes, and productivity in the U.S. economy to support public and private decision making.

About Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

The LAUS program produces monthly and annual employment, unemployment, and labor force data for Census regions and divisions, States, counties, metropolitan areas, and many cities, by place of residence.

About Current Employment Statistics (CES)

The CES program produces detailed industry estimates of employment, hours, and earnings of workers on nonfarm payrolls. CES State and Metro Area produces data for all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and about 450 metropolitan areas and divisions.